



HERGÉ
THE ADVENTURES OF

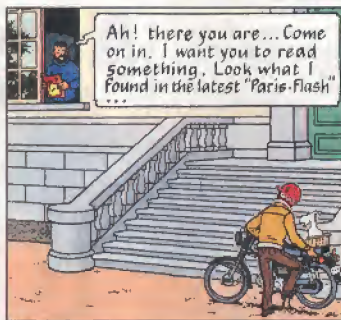
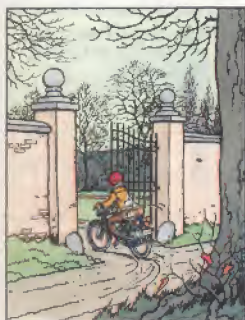
TINTIN AND THE PICAROS



MAGNET



TINTIN AND THE PICAROS



Ah! there you are... Come on in. I want you to read something. Look what I found in the latest "Paris-Flash"...

"Opera star Bianca Castafiore continues her brilliant progress through South America. After triumphs in Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela, she visits San Theodoros, where she will be received by General Tapioca."



General Tapioca... Didn't he topple our old friend Alcazar?

Yes, with the help of the Kûrvi-Tasch regime in Borduria. They say Tapioca's a real tyrant... he's cruel and he's vain...

... In fact he's so vain he changed the name of the capital from Los Dopicos. He called it Tapiocopolis after himself. As for poor old Alcazar, he's gone underground with a band of partisans.

Oh, yes: the famous Picaros.



That's right, the Picaros. It's the name adopted by the guerrillas who've sworn to get rid of Tapioca and his mob. They're said to be backed by another great power... commercial and financial this time: the International Banana Company... A rare old mix-up, as you see!

Blistering barnacles, Tintin! What a lecture!... All that talking makes me thirsty... Here, have a whisky...

No, thanks. Not for me... You know that.

Oh well... Cheers!

PFOUAGH!





Billions of blue blistering barnacles!... Some anamorphic aardvark switched my whisky for this... this cleaning fluid!

Cleaning fluid?!?



Well, bottled bilge-water, then... it all tastes much the same, I dare say... Here! Try some!

I...



I'm no expert like you, of course, but it does seem to me to taste just like whisky...

Like whisky?!?

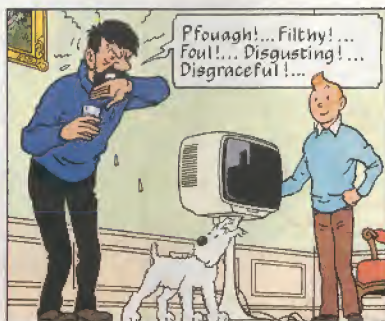


My poor young friend, if that's a glass of whisky, I'm a jellied eel! And as you so rightly pointed out, I'm an expert and I know a bit about it!

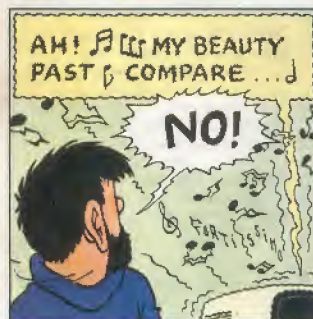
Of course, of course... But still...



I don't know what that hogwash is, but it certainly isn't whisky. However, just to please you, I'm prepared to give it another try...



Pffouagh!... Filthy!... Foul!... Disgusting!... Disgraceful!...



AH! ♪ MY BEAUTY PAST ♪ COMPARE ...♪

NO!



...THESE JEWELS BRIGHT I WEAR!
...Everyone knows the golden voice of the famous Bianca Castafiore...

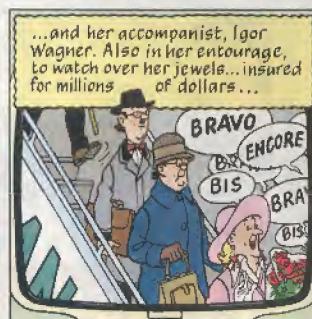
Oh yes! We know it all right!



... who continues her triumphant tour through Latin America. Today she arrived in Tapiacapolis, capital of SanTheodoros ...



...where she met with a tumultuous welcome. As usual, she is attended by her faithful maid, Irma...

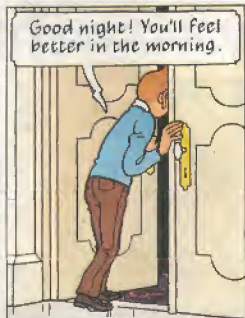
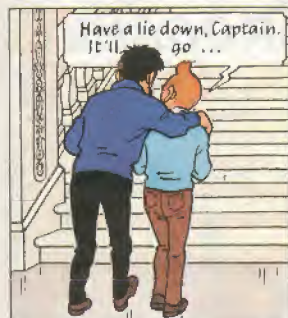
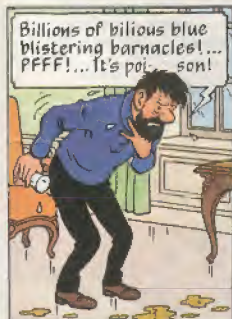
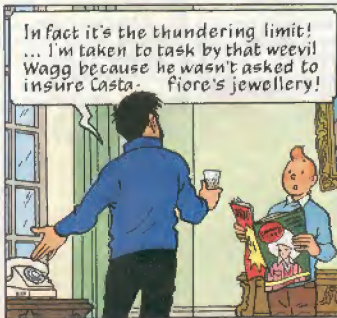
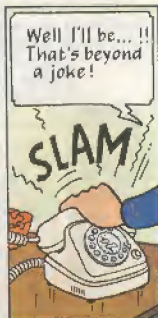
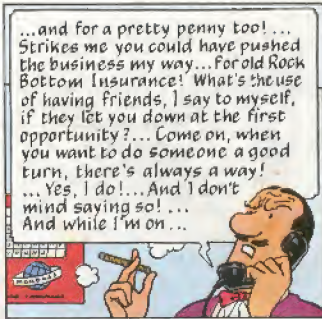


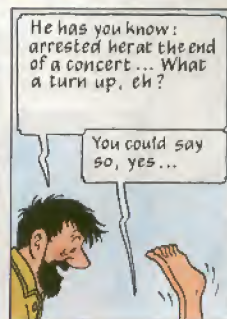
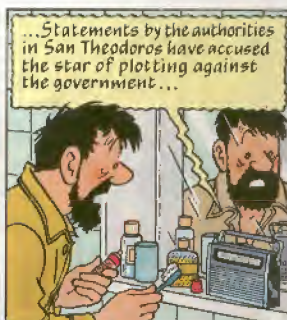
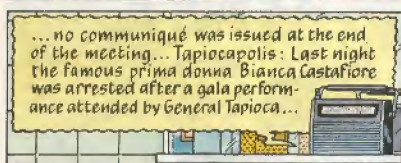
...and her accompanist, Igor Wagner. Also in her entourage, to watch over her jewels... insured for millions of dollars...

BR
ENCORE
BIS
BRA
BIS



...are two certified detectives, always on the alert, always following discreetly in her footsteps.





Listen to this, Tintin: it's positively hilarious!

Go ahead, I'm all ears.

... have been
ference when the min
wards. Some agree
no statement was issued.

**STAR IN TERRORIST PLOT
BIANCA CASTAFIORE ARRES**

TAPIOCAPOLIS, T
International oper
Bianca (Milanese
Castafiore was a
tonight by the S
Theodoros pol
is accused of
against the st
Members of
encourage
taken into
city I

"... A search of her luggage revealed documents which prove conclusively the existence of a plot aimed at the removal of General Tapioca and the overthrow of his regime ...

... The San Theodorian government have let it be known that the plot is centred in a West European country, where the singer was staying before her departure for South America.

It's just like a cheap thriller!

Castafiore in a conspiracy!
A conspiracy of silence, let's hope!!

DONG

Excuse me, sir, but there are two reporters downstairs ... asking if you will see them.

Already?!

All right. Just let me put on a dressing-gown and I'll come.

Why, it's Christopher Willoughby-Drupe and Marco Rizotto of "Paris-Flash". What can I do for you, gentlemen?

Good-morning, Captain. Forgive us for calling so early, but we wanted to be the first to ask what you think of this Castafiore business.

What do I think? ... Perfectly simple!...

I think it's a load of old rubbish! Blistering barnacles! Accusing Castafiore of conspiracy! ... Ridiculous!

Yes, but what about the accusations made against yourself?

Accusations against ME???

Ah, so you don't know about that yet? Here, look... in today's "Trumpeter"...

?

Impossible!... Those San Theodolites must be off their tripods!

Oh, it's you. Here, read this. It concerns you, too.

courageous action which will bring widespread benefits.

CASTAFIORE CONSPIRACY TAPIOCA GOVERNMENT MAKES NEW CHARGES

Tapiocapolls: The Castafiore conspiracy was masterminded from Marlinspike in Western Europe, claimed a government spokesman today. He accused supporters of General Alcazar, and named as principal figures in the plot: Captain Haddock, Tintin the reporter, and Professor Cuthbert Calculus. All three are long-standing friends of General Alcazar. It is known that Signora Bianca Castafiore was recently a guest at Marlinspike Hall, country home of Captain

What is all this? They must be crazy!

You're telling me!

You deny it then?

I'll say we do! The whole story is bilge! Bilge from stem to stern!

DONG

'Morning squire!

"Daily Reporter"! Hi!

A few words for "Radio-Round", Captain...

... and for "Radio Rave-Up"...

Gentlemen, these accusations are as grotesque as they are false! Us? Conspirators? ... Blue blistering bell-bottomed balderdash!

Seriously... Here comes Professor Calculus. Look at him, then tell me whether you think he's capable of taking part in a conspiracy!

Perfectly, my dear sirs! And proud of it!

Perfectly!... And I weigh my words. It's a shame, I tell you! A scandal! ... Imprisoning a poor, weak woman like that! We must take her case at once to the International Court of Justice!



You deny the allegations, Captain. All the same, General Alcazar is one of your friends, isn't he?

One of my friends?... I've met him two or three times, that's all.



If you say so. But I take it you won't deny that Signora Castafiore has been a guest here, at your invitation?...

Invitation? You mean invasion! But from that to conspiracy...



Still, let's not discuss it any more. I tell you, the accusations are insane... Now, gentlemen, let me offer you some whisky...



Let's drink to the release of the Milanese Nightingale, and...



... your good health!



EURK!



Stop! Don't touch it!... There must be some mistake. This whisky is quite undrinkable!

Undrinkable? On the contrary, it's excellent!

Velvet!

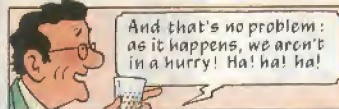
Mmm...



You mustn't drink it, I tell you! It tastes like poison!

Of course, of course: a poison that kills slowly! It's a known fact! Ha! ha! ha!

And that's no problem: as it happens, we aren't in a hurry! Ha! ha! ha!



I'm the only one who finds the whisky revolting. Why? There's something fishy going on...



Unless... That's an idea... Maybe it's a new brand Nestor bought.



I must ask him...

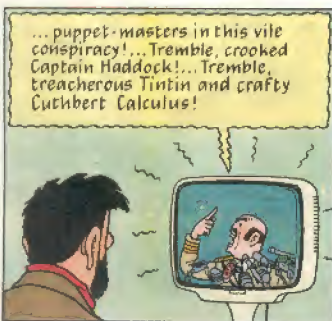
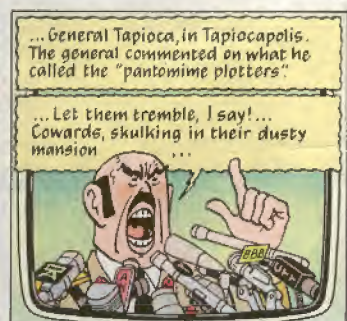
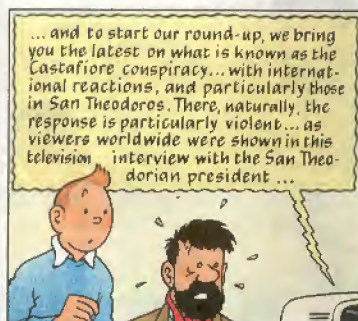


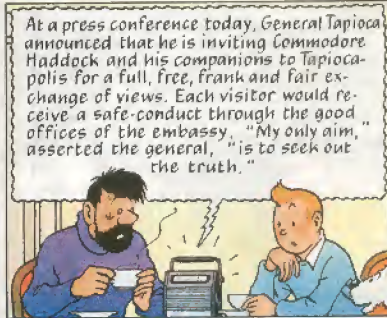
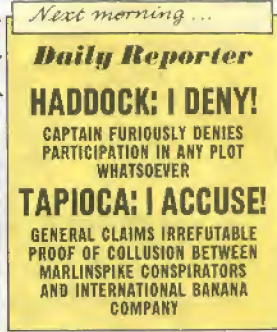
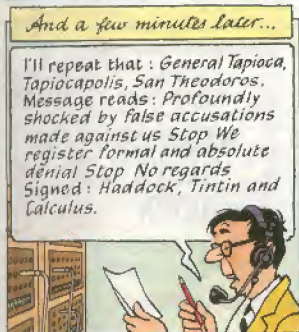
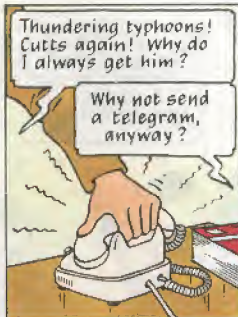
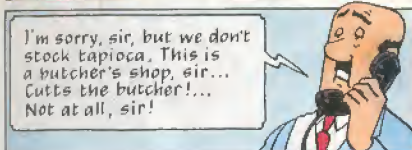
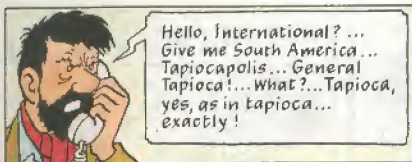
I can't understand the master: I find this "Loch Lomond" superb, as always.

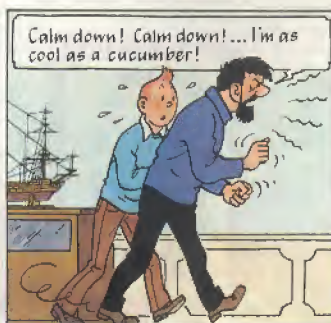
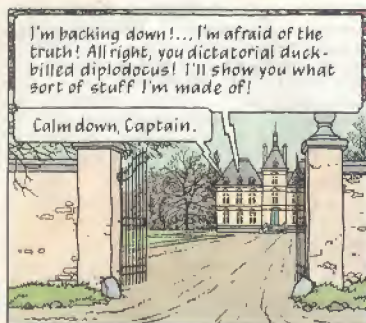
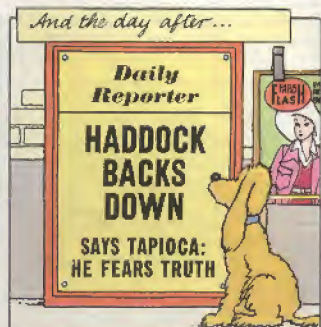
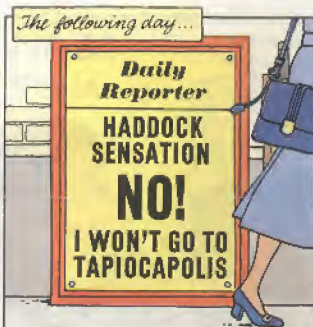
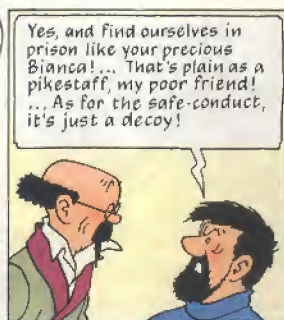


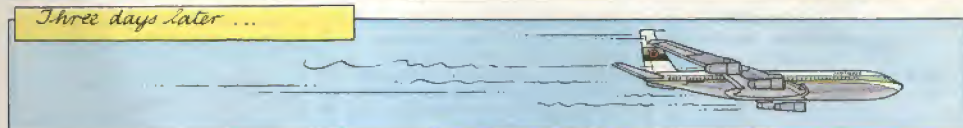
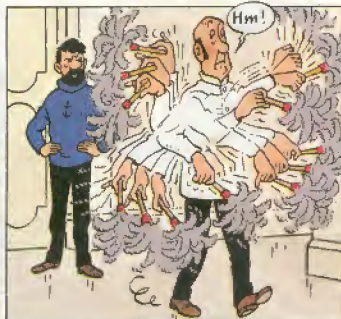
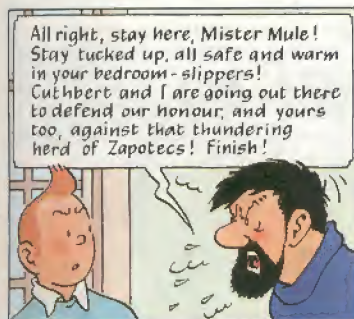
I say, Nestor...

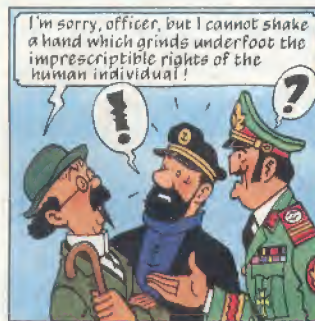
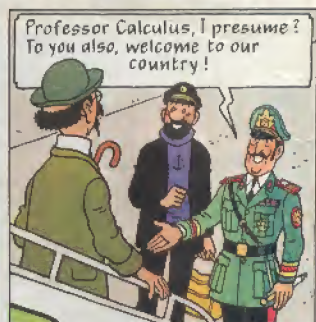
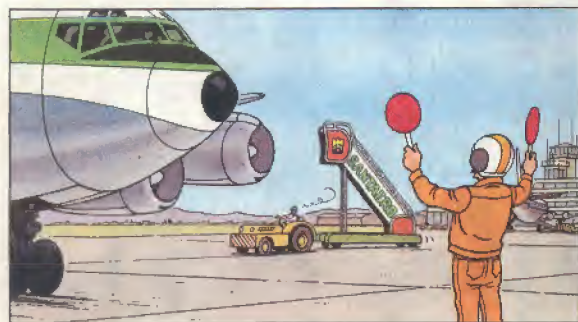
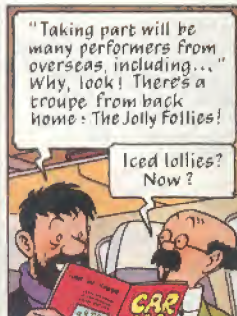


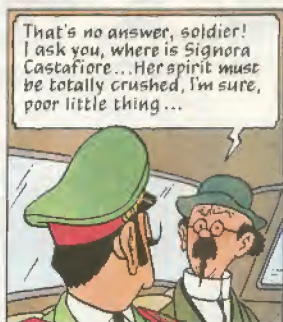
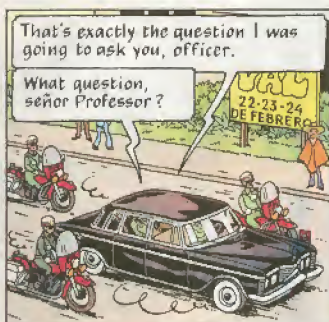
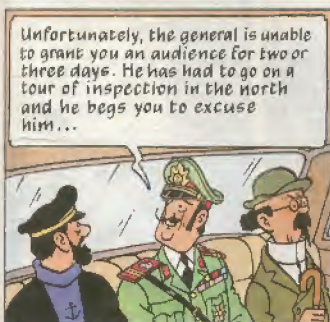
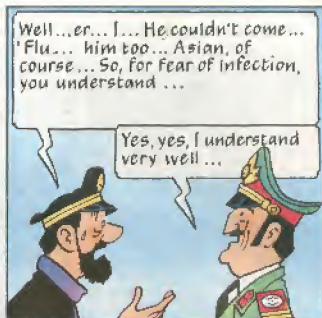


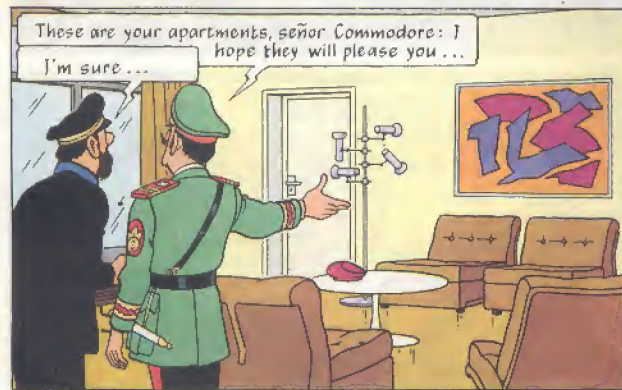
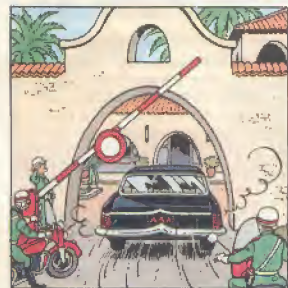
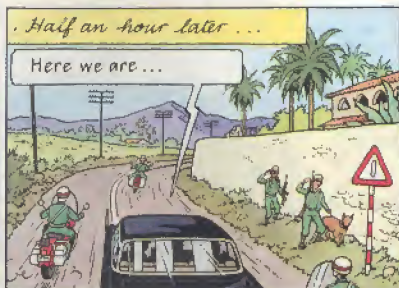
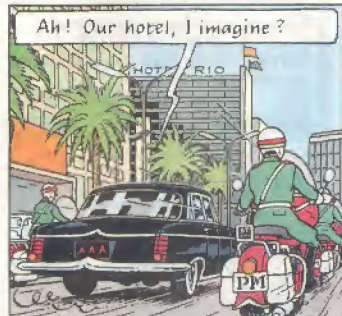




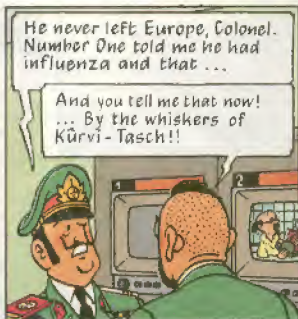


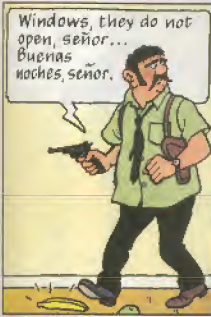
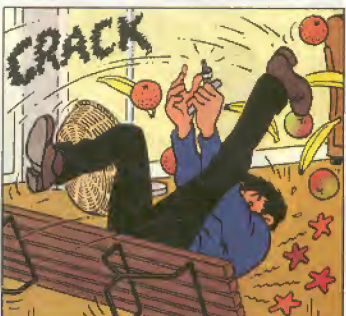
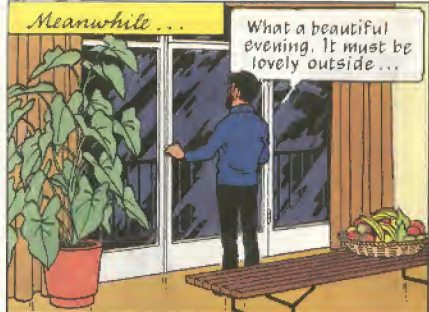


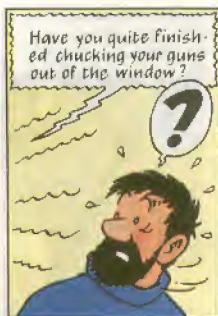


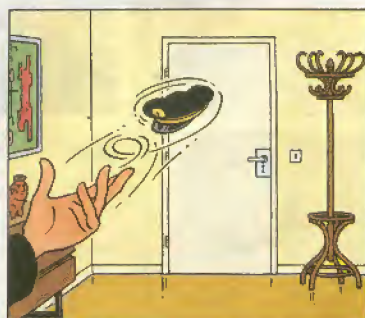
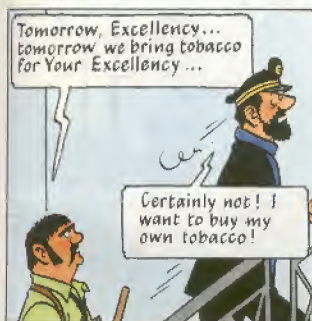


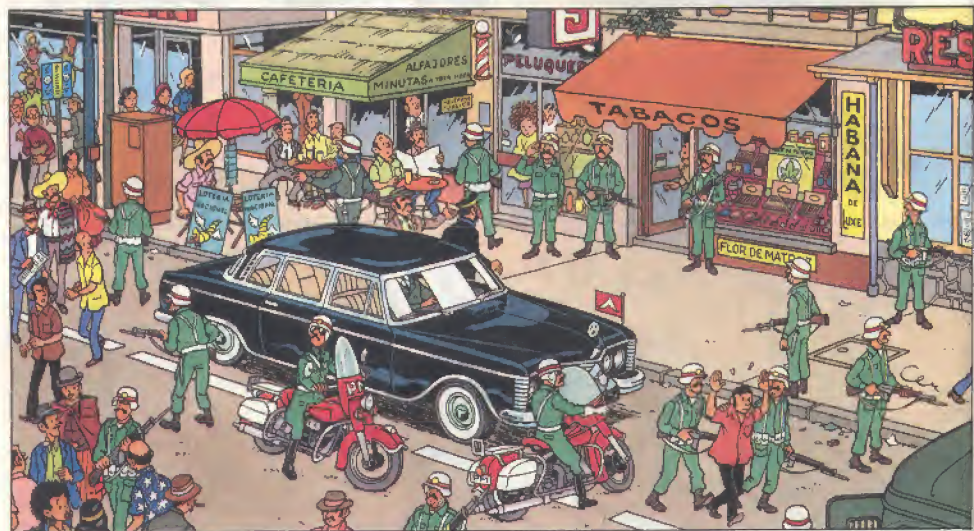
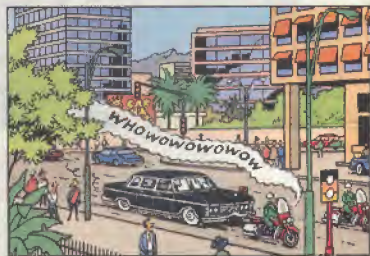
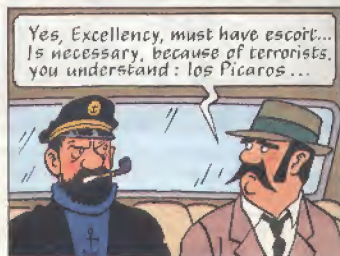












An hour later...

Ah, you're back. Would you believe that Tintin...

Tintin? He was jolly sensible to stay in Marlinspike!

He was absolutely right: we're prisoners, lock, stock and barrel!

I can see our hosts have a true sense of hospitality. That's what I just said to him...

... and he entirely agrees with me.

WHO agrees with you???...And about WHAT???

Exactly, and what's more, he'll tell you so himself!

Won't you, my friend?

¡Buenos dias, Captain!

Tintin, where in heaven's name have you sprung from?

Well, I've come straight from Marlinspike... You don't look very pleased to see me!

Why didn't you stay there, you silly fellow?

Let's say I was missing you, Captain...

... and the Professor too, of course.

On a horse? We came by car.

You'd hardly left when I began to blame myself for not having gone with you. I thought of all our friends in prison and the need to try to save them... So I took a plane... It's quite simple...

And it's crazy!

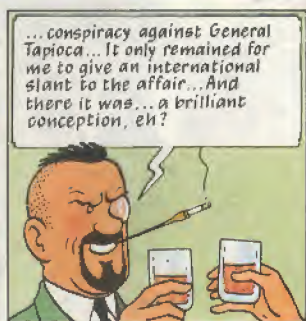
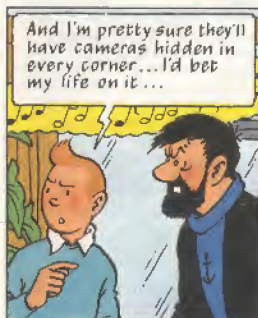
Because you were right! Would you believe...

Ssh!

Ah! You've got a record here I simply adore! ... May I put it on, Captain?

AH! MY BEAUTY

Have you gone raving mad?



Three days go by...

But WHEN are we going to see that confounded fellow Tapioca? After all, that's the principal reason we came here!



Instead of which, for three days they've shuttled us from the Museum of Ethnography to the birthplace of the Great Liberator, General Olivaro...



...then to the zoo, then to the cathedral of the Santísima Virgen de la Inmaculada Concepción... And what marvel have they in store for us tomorrow?



A confetti-maker for the carnival?... Or perhaps a sombrero factory?... Heaven knows what!



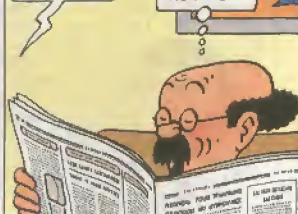
Billions of blue blistering barnacles! What's happened to me? Why can't I take a single drop of alcohol any more?



RAT TAT TAT

Come in!

He! he!



RAT TAT TAT

YES!
COME!



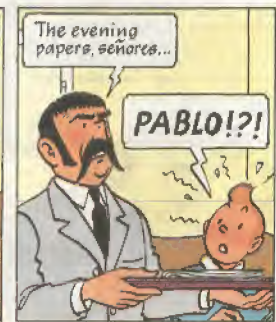
Buenas tardes, señores...

Hello, surely that isn't Manolo's voice?



The evening papers, señores...

PABLO!?!



Great snakes!... What a surprise!... I never ...

Sssh!



Good evening, señores. My name is Pablo. I've been sent to replace Manolo, who suffered a slight accident this morning...



THAT?

Nothing serious, luckily: just a sprain.



YES?...

...He'll be back in a day or two.

O.K.!



Waste no time, amigos! Your lives are in danger!

Our lives?

In danger?



Yes. The day after tomorrow a commando of Picaros, but not real Picaros, will pretend to attack this villa. In the course of the fighting, quite by accident, all three of you will be killed!

?

What?



The official version: the Picaros tried to kidnap you!

But anyway, why all the palaver?... And who wants to kill us?



Do you know who runs the Security Police in this country? No?... Well, it's Colonel Espoñza, or, to give him his real name: Sponz.

Sponz!!!

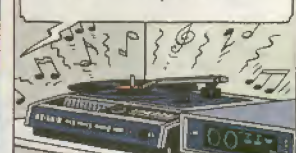
...Who was Chief of Police in Szohôd?



That's the one! He's been "lent" to General Tapioca to re-organise the Security Police in San Theodoros... and when he heard of Signora Castafiore's arrival, he dreamed up a plan to get rid of the three of you...



Luckily for you, the Picaros and their leader General Alcazar have eyes and ears everywhere... So this is what we're going to do. Tomorrow, Colonel Alvarez will take you on a trip to Hotuatatob! to see an ancient pyramid...



You'll climb to the top, with me. The soldiers will simply encircle the base. Then a commando of Picaros, real Picaros this time, will open fire on the northern face of the pyramid...

Ha! ha! ha!
Success, success!



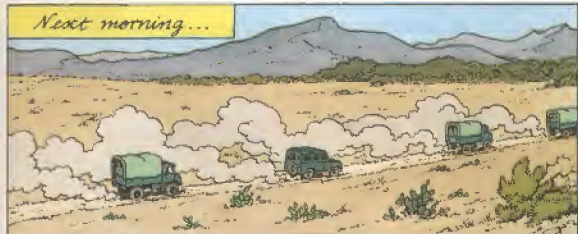
Under cover of the diversion you'll climb down the south face, having disarmed me and carefully tied me up. Two hundred metres away, right in front of you, one of Alcazar's trucks will be waiting...



Thanks, Pablo! Saving my life is becoming a habit with you. This is the second time!



Next morning...



Not far now: we're coming to the forest. We'll be there in a quarter of an hour...

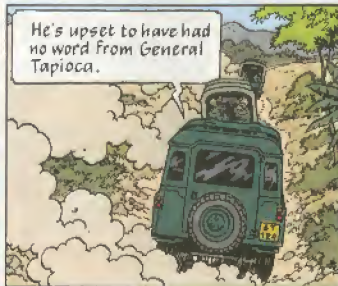


Your young friend seems very preoccupied...

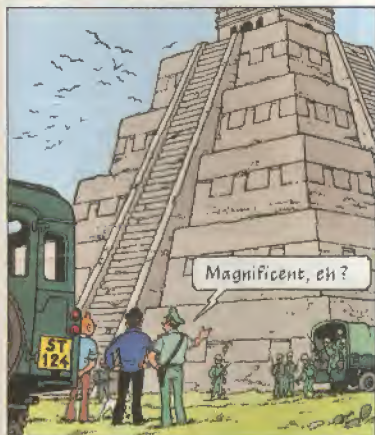
Oh, you've noticed it too?



He's upset to have had no word from General Tapioca.



So long as that's all it is!... I forgot to tell you, General Tapioca will see you tomorrow morning, and... Ah! there's the pyramid!



Magnificent, eh?

Superb!...Marvellous!... Can we go up?

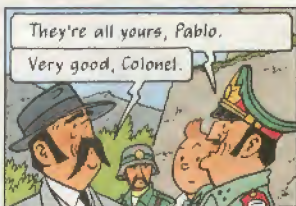
Of course. But you'll excuse me if I don't accompany you...

I expect you've often climbed it before?

Very often. But Pablo will act as your guide.



They're all yours, Pablo. Very good, Colonel.



Be careful. It's a steep slope and many people get giddy up there.

You are most thoughtful, Colonel.



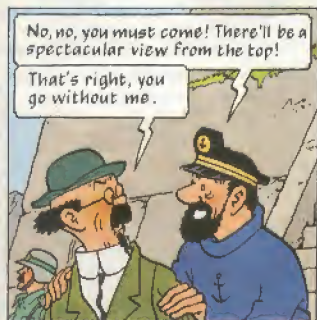
Come along, Professor.

No thank you, Captain, I'd rather stay here. As you know, I suffer from vertigo...



No, no, you must come! There'll be a spectacular view from the top!

That's right, you go without me.



Cuthbert, come along, I beg of you!...

Great sunspots! I told you I don't want to!



Puma calling Jaguar!...
Puma calling Jaguar!...
Are you receiving me?...
Come in now... Over...



Jaguar calling Puma!...
Jaguar calling Puma!... Re-
ceiving you strength five... Over.



The truck's on it's
way... they'll be with
you in seven or
eight minutes...
Mind you don't miss!



Be like missing an
elephant at three
metres in an alley,
Colonel!... And I've
never done that
yet!



You see, General Alcazar is true
to his friends!



You can count on me!... So the
minute I received your message
I decided to move...



Our message?... You say
you received a message
from us?

Sure, the one Pablo
brought me... What's
the matter? You seem
surprised about something.

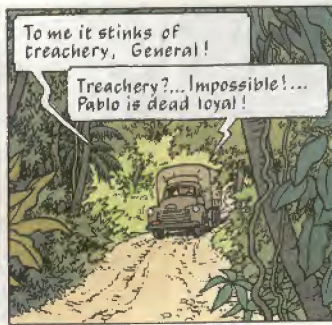


I certainly am!... Because we never
sent you any message... On the
contrary, it was Pablo who told us,
from you, that our lives were in
danger but that you'd pull us
out of trouble.



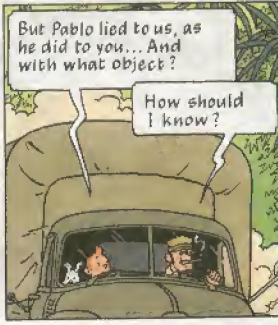
To me it stinks of
treachery, General!

Treachery?... Impossible!...
Pablo is dead loyal!

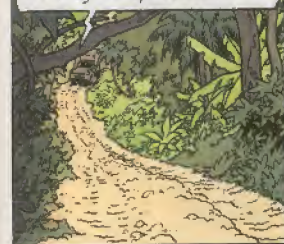


But Pablo lied to us, as
he did to you... And
with what object?

How should
I know?



It bothers me, General... I've
got a feeling someone's
setting a trap for us...



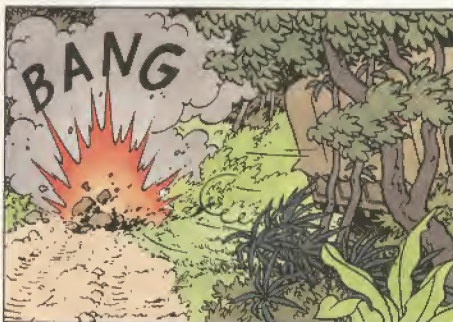
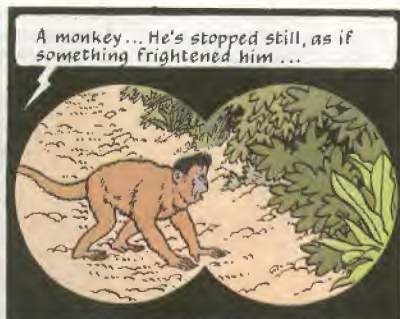
Let's stop, General: we need
time to think...

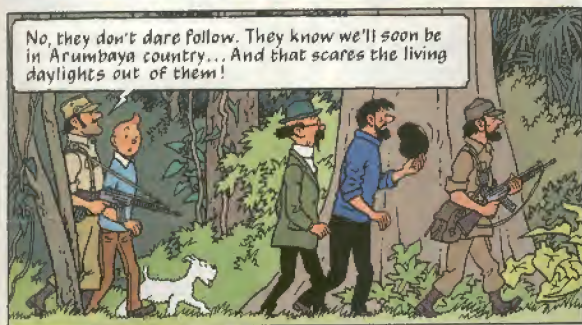
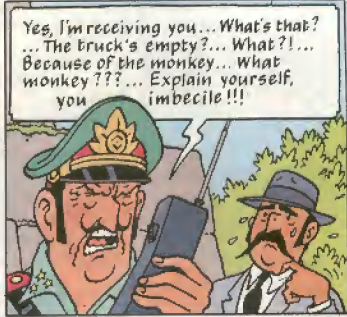
No way, amigo! We've a
long trip ahead... and
there's nothing to fear.

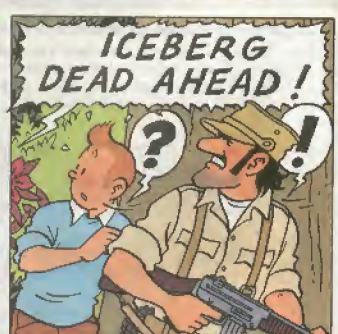
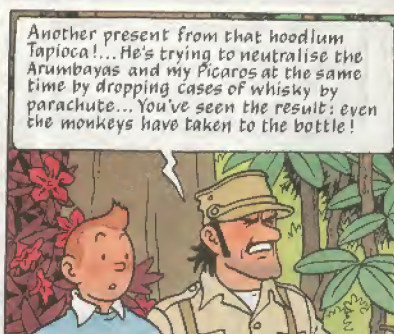


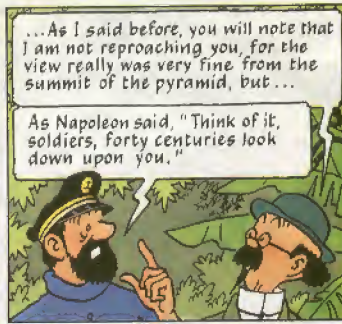
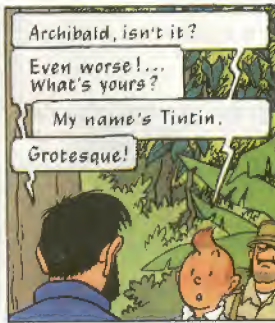
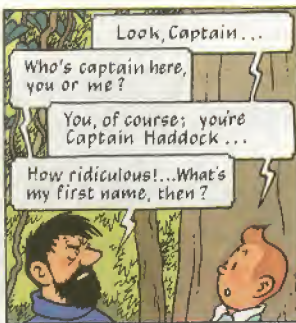
Jaguar calling Puma... We
can see the truck now...













Ridgewell!... You never get any better do you, you old joker!... Come on out of there!



Hello, General!... Hello, Tintin!... It's good to see you again!



Nice to be back, Doctor Ridgewell!... How are the Arumbayas?... Learnt to play golf yet?



Don't talk about it!... But on the other hand they've made great strides... in drunkenness, I'm afraid... By courtesy of General Tapioca!



LET ME GO!...
TINTIN!!!
HELP!!!



Tintin, help!... Save me!... Stop thief!... Fire!... Police!... Help, I am undone!

Ha! ha! ha!

Wotat it 'fa!

Ha! ha! ha!



That's enough!...
Gi'dahda vit!



You see?... Tapioca has a lot to answer for... Come, we must go. The village is still some distance away.



Dipsomaniacs!... That's what "civilisation" has done for those "savages".



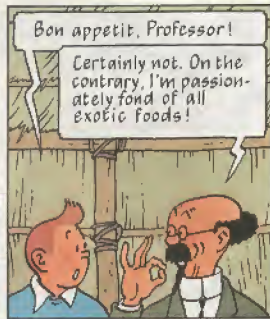
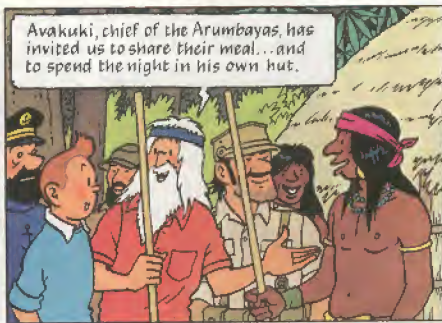
That evening...
There's the Arumbaya village.

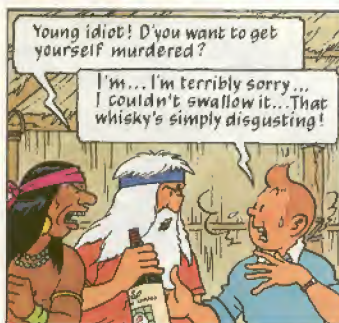


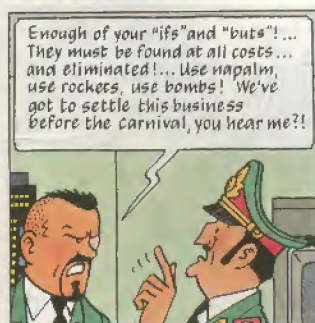
Excuse me, Captain... I see they are preparing some sort of meal over there...



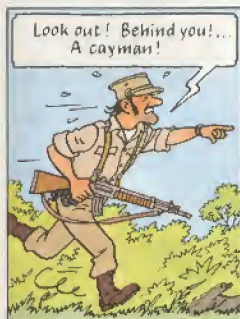
He! he!...













Yes, it's a gymnotus... a dear little gymnotus: an electric fish...

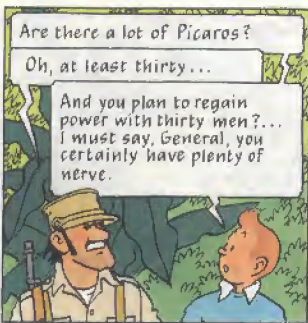
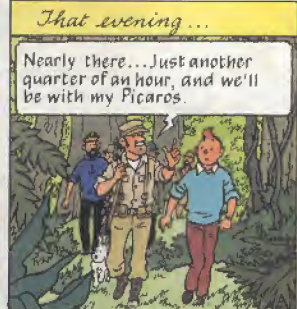


Lucky for you it was only a little one. Big electric eels grow up to a couple of metres long and can stun a horse with a single discharge!

Well, lucky for me that I'm not a horse!



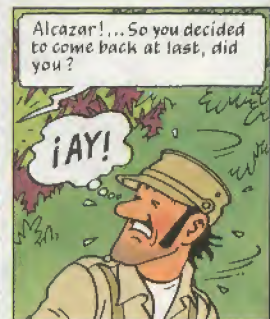
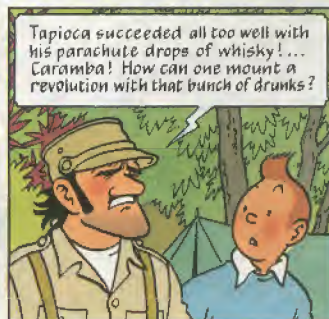
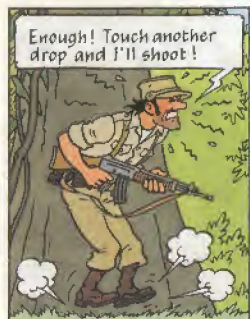
Come, señores, it's time we were moving on. It's a long way from here to the camp and we do better to get there in daylight...

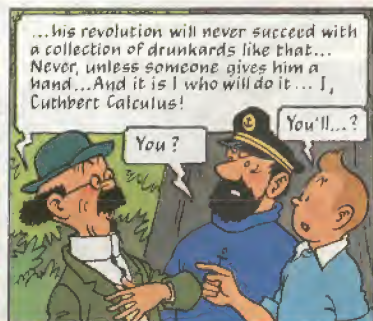
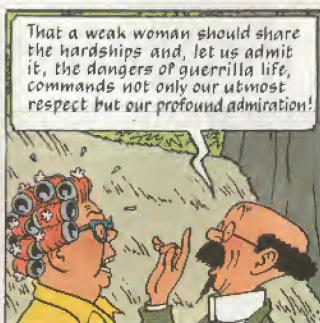
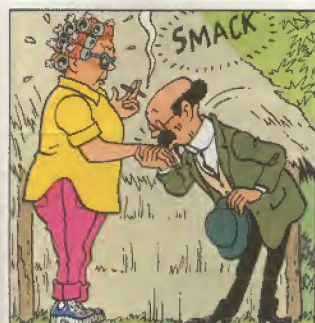
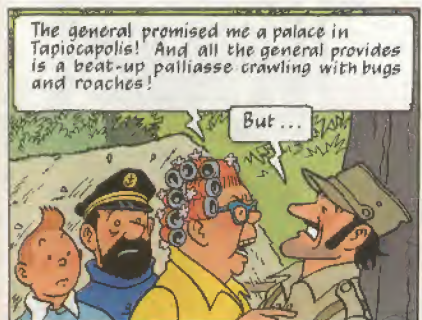


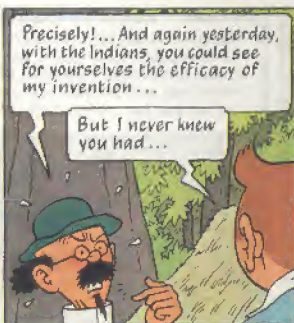
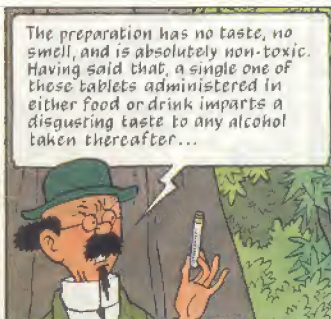
Sure, hombre! It's perfectly possible, but only during the carnival. For those three days the hooch flows like water... even the garrison get hopelessly drunk... So, if we want to succeed, we have to mount our operation during the carnival.











Stay with him, Captain... And for the time being stop him from doing anything hasty... I'm off to talk to the General.



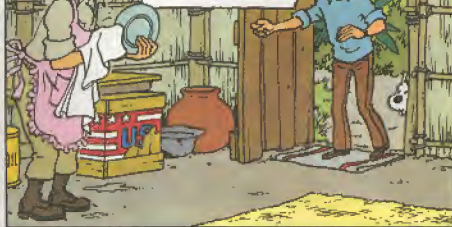
RAT TAT TAT



Come in!



Ah, it's you, amigo mio! Come on in.
I... I'm not disturbing you?

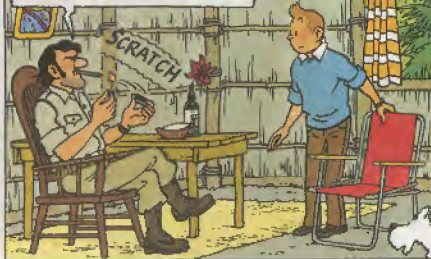


Alcazar, the dishes!

I'll carry on presently, palomita mia: promise!



Sit down, hombre... What brings you here?



Another cigar?... That makes three since you came back!

Does... does it, my dove?



I've been thinking over what you said to me earlier: a revolution is impossible while your Figaros have only one idea in their heads: whisky!

Alas, that's quite true.



But what would you say if someone succeeded in curing them of their bad habits?

Ah, that's impossible, amigo.



And yet, if you managed to do that... ¡Mil bombas! I'd give you half the gold reserves in the Banco de la Nación!...

Ahem!

... er, let's say a third ...

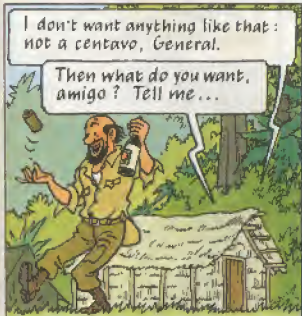
Ahem!

Well... er... ten per cent... What about that?



I don't want anything like that: not a centavo, General.

Then what do you want, amigo? Tell me...



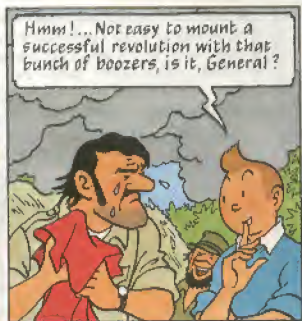
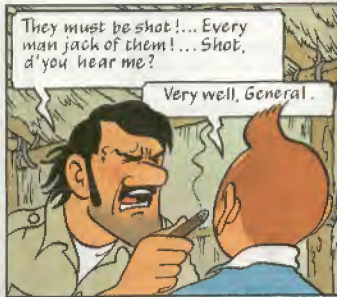
A promise that you'll carry out your revolution without bloodshed... that there won't be any reprisals, or executions, or anything of that sort ...

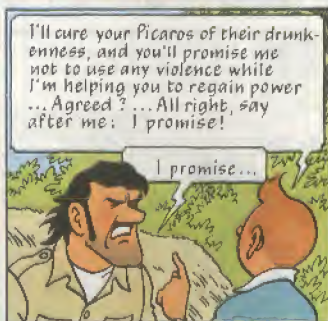
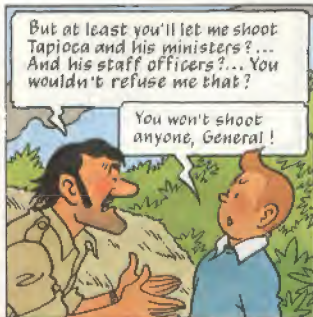
WHAT?

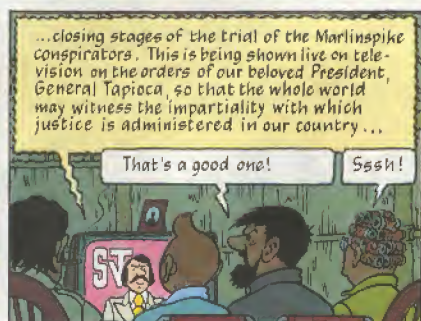
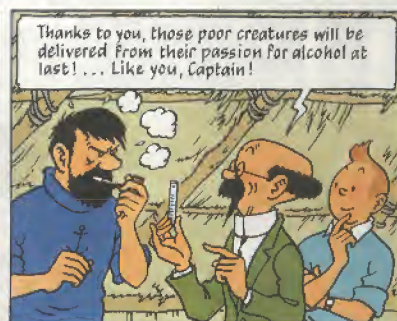


You're crazy!... Or else you're a traitor... and ought to be shot here and now!









Recently, our beloved President generously invited Captain Haddock, Professor Calculus and the reporter Tintin to our country to put their case. He guaranteed them their freedom. And how did they repay him? With cold cynicism! They took the first opportunity to flee into the jungle and join their accomplice Alcazar and his villainous Picaros!



This action alone is enough to prove that the grave accusations against the three defendants are entirely justified. But over now to the Palace of Justice where the Public Prosecutor is putting the case for the Republic...



... You have before you, gentlemen, two sinister characters who, more easily to accomplish their evil purpose... Do I need to remind you of it? ...



... to assassinate our beloved President... did not hesitate to pass themselves off as honest policemen! ... But their monstrous subterfuge deceived no one! Look at their low brows, their furtive glances!



... In short, look at their brutish faces! Policemen? Them? ... Cheats! Imposters! Assassins!

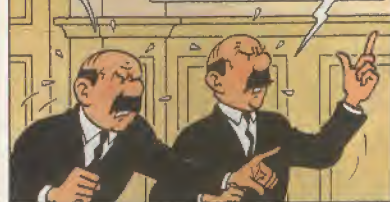


... Men who, to appear as loyal supporters of General Tapioca and the noble ideology of Kürvi-Tasch, carried their duplicity so far as to grow moustaches!



That's a lie! ... We've been wearing moustaches since we were born!

To be precise: we're worn bearing them!



Silence! ... You will speak when you are spoken to!



... Gentlemen, for these two wretches, who can have no claim to extenuating circumstances, I demand the DEATH PENALTY!

You see? None of your fancy scruples there, eh?



The death penalty!! ... He certainly doesn't mince his words... He means to go the whole hog!

To be precise: his words certainly mean he's going to mince the hog whole!

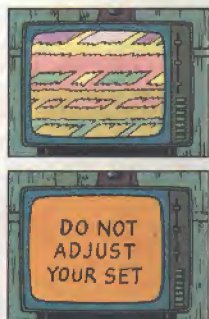
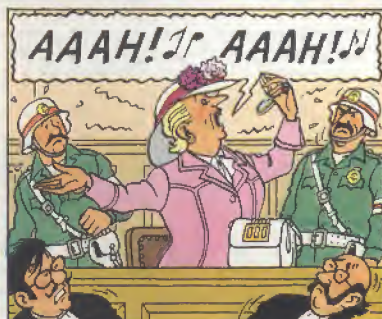
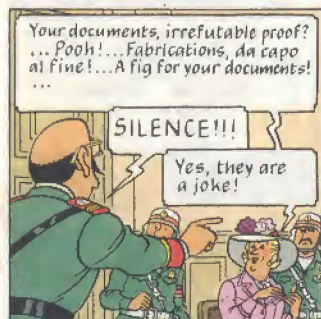
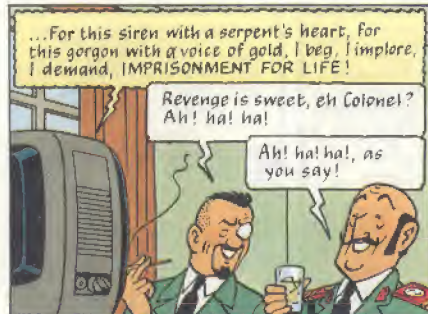


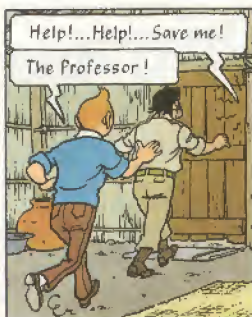
But the real brains behind the plot... and we have here documents which prove it irrefutably... are those of a woman!!!



A woman... or should we call her a monster? ... who lent her talents, her undoubted talents, to a criminal cause: her name is Bianca Castafiore, "the Milanese Nightingale"!







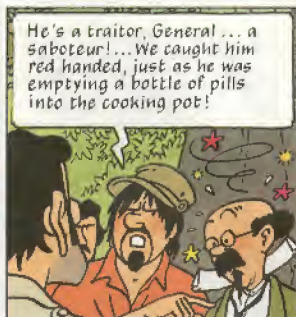
Help!...Help!... Save me!

The Professor!

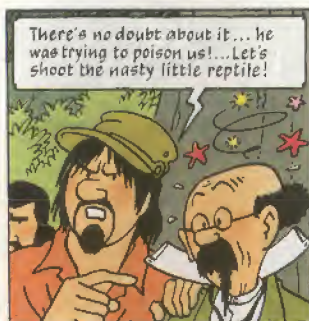


Kill the traitor!

Hang him!



He's a traitor, General... a saboteur!... We caught him red handed, just as he was emptying a bottle of pills into the cooking pot!

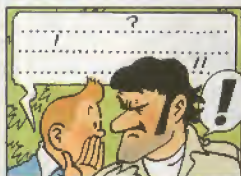


There's no doubt about it... he was trying to poison us!... Let's shoot the nasty little reptile!



General?

Yes?



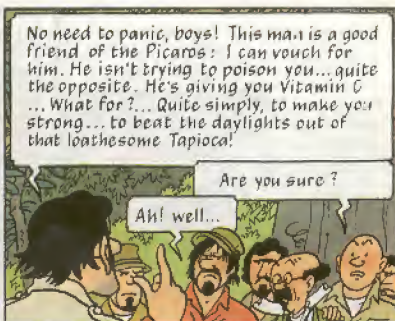
...

...

...

...

...



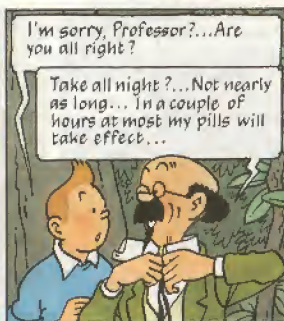
No need to panic, boys! This man is a good friend of the Picards: I can vouch for him. He isn't trying to poison us... quite the opposite. He's giving you Vitamin C... What for?... Quite simply, to make you strong... to beat the daylights out of that loathesome Tapioca!

Are you sure?

Ah! well...



Sure as I stand here!... Eat away!... I give you my solemn word... you won't come to any harm!



I'm sorry, Professor?... Are you all right?

Take all night?... Not nearly as long... In a couple of hours at most my pills will take effect...



From that moment, none of those men will be able to stomach a single drop of alcohol!... Just like you, Captain!... Isn't that marvelous?

GNNNN!



¡Gracias, hombre, gracias!

MBLL...



And to show my appreciation, I create you companion of the order of San Fernando, first class!

A glass?... How nice!... A little iced water will be delicious...



Whatever the general may say, I'm not eating that stuff...

These new-fangled chemicals... you never can tell...

Look at them, Captain... They're obviously suspicious... And if they don't eat that food they'll go on drinking... So the revolution will fail... and our friends the Thompsons will be shot!



There's the dog... He belongs to the gringos. I'm going to give him some of that vitaminized stew... If he eats it, we will too... Otherwise...

He's right!

I agree!



Doggyswoggy?... Come come come come...

Hello, what does he want me for?



Come come come!... Yummyyum!... Looky dere!... Looky dere, good for little doggywogsies!...

He must be daft, talking like that...



Let's hope... let's hope he'll eat the food...



?

SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF



Y EEEK!



You saw that, boys?... Are we going to eat what even a dog won't touch?

You're right!

We won't eat that muck!



Go back at once, Snowy, and eat it!

But...



That slop! It's full of pimentos!



SCHLOOP
GLURP
GLURP
SCHLOP



Hey, boys! Look!... He's changed his mind!... Now we can have some too!

¡Bueno! I'm hungry!

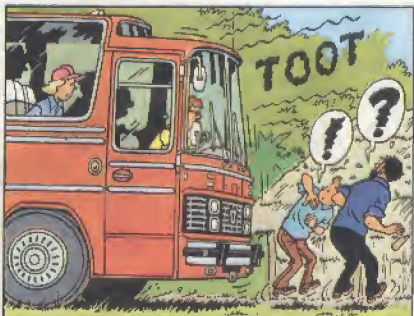


They're eating it! Now we can save our friends!



TOOT

! ?





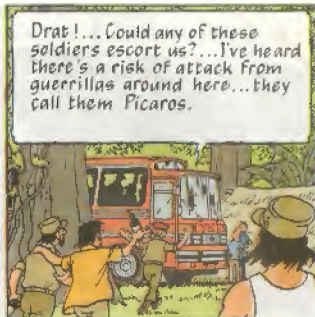
Hello, a b-b-b-... hic... bus!

Ah! Not a pink elephant today, then?



Is it far to Tapiocapolis, chum?

Tapiocapolis?... Great snakes, you're hopelessly off the road.

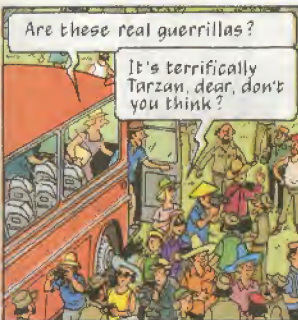


Drat!... Could any of these soldiers escort us?... I've heard there's a risk of attack from guerrillas around here... they call them Picaros.



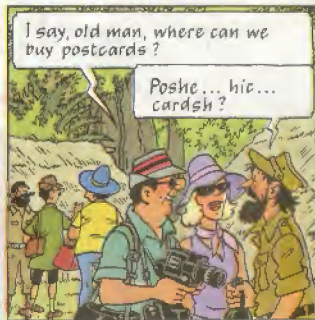
That's exactly where you are: among the Picaros!

No kidding?



Are these real guerrillas?

It's terrifically Tarzan, dear, don't you think?



I say, old man, where can we buy postcards?

Poshe... hic... cardsh?

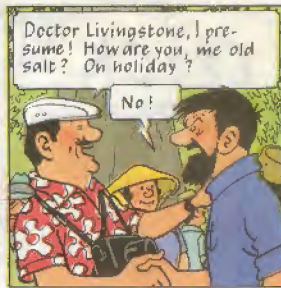


They must have a souvenir shop somewhere about the place...



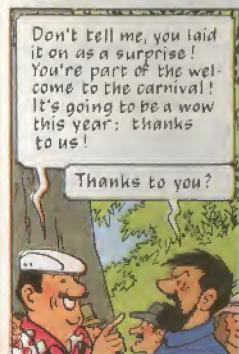
Blow me, look who's here!

Jolyon Wagg!



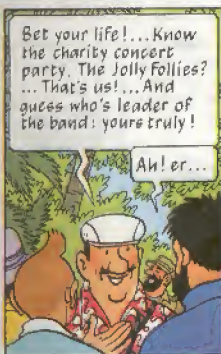
Doctor Livingstone, I presume! How are you, me old salt? On holiday?

No!



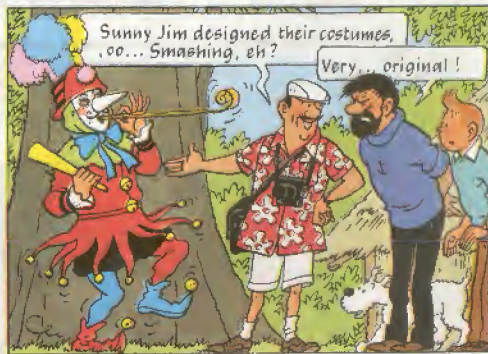
Don't tell me, you laid it on as a surprise! You're part of the welcome to the carnival! It's going to be a wow this year: thanks to us!

Thanks to you?



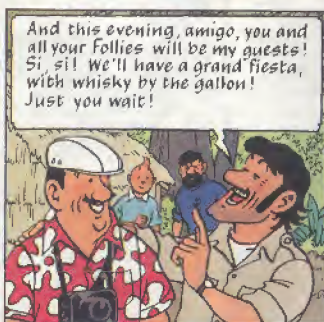
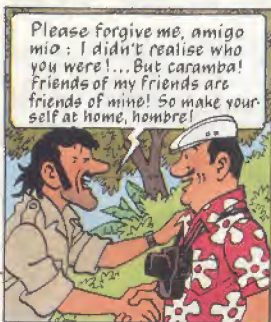
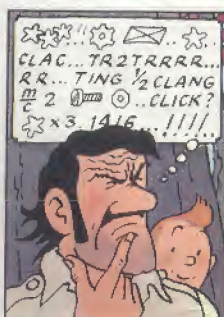
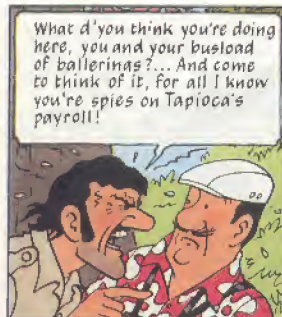
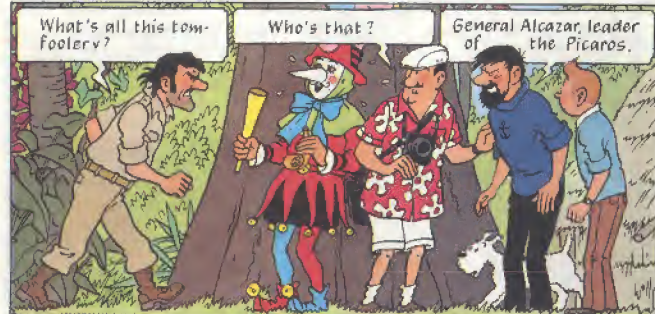
Bet your life!... Know the charity concert party. The Jolly Follies? ... That's us!... And guess who's leader of the band: yours truly!

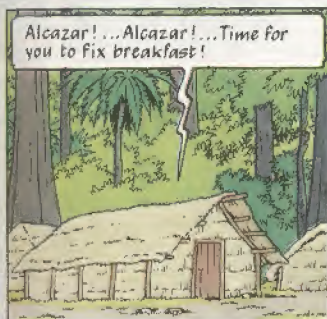
Ah! er...



Sunny Jim designed their costumes, oo... Smashing, eh?

Very... original!





My dove,
I've gon to start the rev-
lusion against the vial
Tapioca. Wen its over you
will have the pallis witch
I've promist you.
Much luv from your
Zazar
I've borrowd the Jollyfoli's
buss and have left sum
Pizaros to look after you.
Z.



i Caramba! These Jolly Follies were sent from Heaven!...Thanks to them and to your friend Calculus I'll soon be back in power...

It's a shabby way to treat those poor people, sneaking off with their bus and their costumes. But it's the only way to save our friends...

Never mind, I'll be able to reward them with appropriate generosity as soon as I've chucked out that vile Tapioca: I'll admit them all to the Order of San Fernando!



Tomorrow afternoon we'll arrive in Tapiocapolis...and that'll soon be re-named Alcazarepolis. It's the opening day of the carnival. Before we reach the city we'll rehearse our plans to the very last detail...

We'll be dressed in the Jolly Follies costumes, with our guns at the ready...

With orders not to use them!

The next afternoon...

This is it, my brave Picaros! We're here!...Now each of you guys: remember what you have to do...



Meanwhile...

Are you sure it isn't dangerous, General, letting all these people assemble in front of the windows? You'll be a sitting target for the first Picaro...

No danger, Colonel...

... Even if by some extraordinary chance armed Picaros managed to infiltrate the crowd, they'd be far too drunk to shoot straight! ... As you know, my parachute drops of whisky have been a total success.

My spies have been quite definite: Alcazar's men are never sober... And they'd be quite incapable of engaging in any serious action, poor fools...



This is it, boys!



Everybody out!



Watch it, Captain, remember you're a Folly!

Don't worry!



WE'RE THE JOLLY JOLLY FOLLIES... HEY NONNY NO... HEY NONNY NO...



Where are those people from?

The programme says: "The Jolly Follies, a charity concert party from Europe".



Excellent! ... Just listen to the beat! ... They've even got our guards joining in the dance!



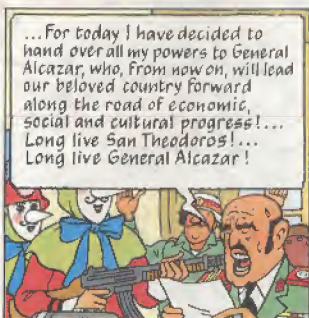
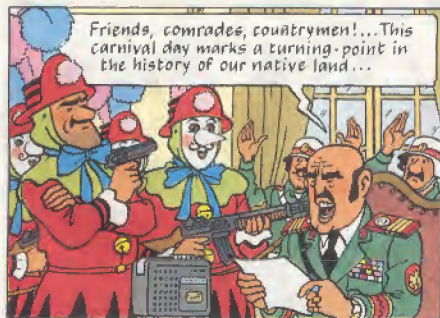
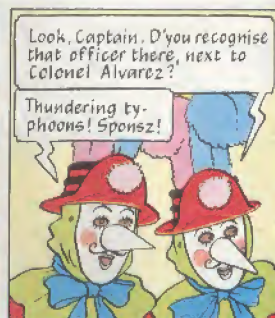
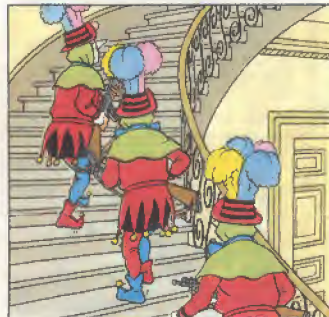
Ready! ... On the next hey nonny no, out comes the chloroform!



HEY NONNY NO!



Put him with the rest in the porch. Your guns are there...



There it is ... in the bag! ... Pedro, you and your section hop along to the Radio Building and see this statement is broadcast immediately ... Understand?

Si!

My heartiest congratulations, General! ... Death to Tapioca! ... Would you like him shot at once?

Long live General Alcazar!

Shoot Tapioca!

Long live General Alcazar!

Executions are out! ... His life will be spared.

But General, it's contrary to every custom... The people will be terribly disappointed...

The colonel is right, General... For pity's sake don't pardon me! Do you want me completely dishonoured?

Permit me to insist, General!

My decision is irrevocable: your life will be spared! An aircraft will be placed at your disposal, to convey you wherever you may wish to go.

Are you mad?

No, I'm not ... But he is! ... This muchacho made me give my word that the coup would be bloodless! ... I'm desperately sorry...

Come on, let's greet old Sponsz ...

Ah, an idealist, is he? ... Young chaps nowadays have absolutely no respect for anything... Not even the oldest traditions!

We live in sad times!

We meet again, Colonel Sponsz!

Don't worry, Sponsz, even you have nothing to fear. They're pining for you in Borduria, so your ticket to Szohöd is booked for the morning...

We caught this joker trying to escape...

It's Tintin! ... I'm finished!

Pablo!

Mercy, Señor Tintin, mercy! Please don't shoot me!

That's less than you deserve, you subtropical sea-louse!

Don't be afraid, Pablo; no one is going to hurt you. You once saved my life, and I haven't forgotten that... You are free to go... Adios, Pablo!

You made a mistake there, Tintin, and you'll live to regret it. You're making a rod for your own back... To be precise...

The Thompsons, General!... The Thompsons!... They could be shot while we stand here talking!

Ah, yes... you think so?

Yes, General. The execution is due to take place in twenty-two minutes, precisely!

¡Mil bombas! Quick, call the prison and cancel the execution!

At once, General!



...fifty seconds... Pip Pip Pip ... At the third stroke it will be five thirty-eight precisely... Pip Pip Pip... At the third...



You did it on purpose! Dial the right number this time, or I'll have you shot!

RRRRRING
RRRRRING

...precisely... Pip Pip Pip ... At the third stroke it will be five forty and ten seconds.

If it doesn't work this time, I'll personally shoot the Minister of Telecommunications!!

The number you have dialled does not exist. Please consult your directory.

Only one thing to do: dash to the prison and save them ourselves!

Take B Section with you! The colonel will guide you! I'll have his head if you're too late!

¡Rápido!... ¡Rápido!... por Dios!

Meanwhile ...

I'm terribly sorry, gentlemen, but we must go, please... It's time...

And one must be on time.

To be precise: time, gentlemen please!

Don't worry: it's a nasty moment, but you'll soon forget it...

This is San Theodores National Radio. We are interrupting our programmes for a special announcement by His Excellency General Tapioca...

A car!... We must commandeer a car!

Useless! No vehicle could get through this crowd...

What can we do?

Look! That float...

What? You mean...

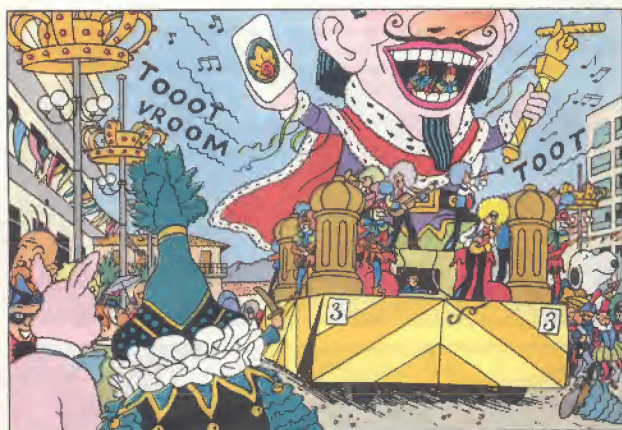
Yes! It's the only possible answer!

You!... Keep on playing!

Keep playing!... Don't stop!

Driver!... To the State Prison! And put your foot down!

Put my foot down?... With this crate?... You must be joking!



Meanwhile ...

Blindfolds? Certainly not!
... A Thompson looks death
straight in the face!

To be precise: A Thomson
with a straight face looks
like death!



It's your lucky day. The music adds a little
gaiety to the party, doesn't it?



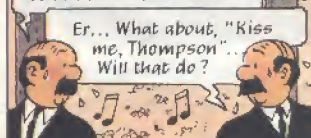
We simply must
be in time!

Squ-a-a-a-d!... Ready!



Can you perhaps think of
some famous last words?

Er... What about, "Kiss
me, Thompson"
Will that do?



Squad! Take aim!...



Hold your fire!... Hands up, the
lot of you!... Drop your guns!

A few minutes later...

Saved by the bell, eh?...

Oh? I didn't hear it, with the music...

And the friends of these gentlemen...Where are they?

I'll take you there at once, Colonel!

They've been very well treated, Colonel. They'll tell you so themselves...

I hope so, for your sake!

This is Signora Castafiore's cell. They've just taken in her lunch...

...and I'm telling you for the last time!

...I want my pasta cooked properly, d'you hear? ... "al dente", as we say at home in Italy!

Ah, Madonna!... Captain Hemlock!

Come, caro mio!... Come to my arms!

No!!

I knew you'd come to rescue me from this dreadful place!

Ahem!...Here is Señor Igor Wagner, señora...

... and your maid ...

Ah, my dear Irma, how I have missed you!

Ah, what joy to be all together again! I simply must sing!

No! No!

No!

Not that!

Next morning ...

The army, the navy and the air force have come over to me! ¡Mil bombas! It's an overwhelming triumph!



And it's partly due, of course, to you... Si, si, si!... Alcazar is not ungenerous: you will be decorated with the order of San Fernando!... As for your five per cent...

Please forget that, General!



General, the bus you sent to the camp to fetch Señora Alcazar and the Jolly Follies has returned.

Good! Show them in here...



So there you are, Alcazar! What's the game, eh? You've been absent without leave again!

I can explain, palomita mia...



Señor Wagg, allow me to express the deep gratitude of the San Theodorian people for the help you have given to our cause. I therefore appoint you and your Jolly Follies to the order of San Fernando, and invite you to next year's carnival.



And Señor Professor... In recognition of the magnificent role you played, I appoint you Knight Grand Cross of the Order of San Fernando, with Oak Leaves.

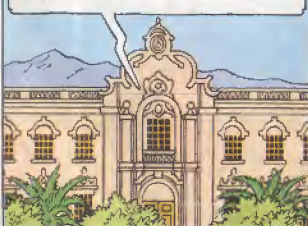
No thank you, my friend. Never between meals.



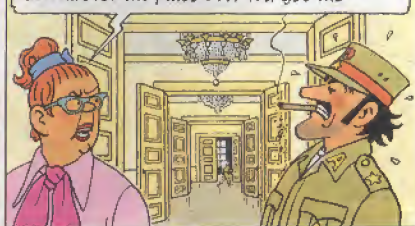
Good old Alcazar! Give him a big hurrah!



As for you, my dove... I promised you a palace. Bueno, I keep my word. This is all yours, from now on.



Fine and dandy!... Anyone can see it isn't you who's expected to keep this dump clean... So for a start, stop dropping cigar ash all over the place!... You get me?



Two days later...

Blistering barnacles, I shan't be sorry to be back home in Marlinspike...

Me too, Captain...



Me too, but with a little mustard if you please.



THE END

